

**MINUTES**  
**CHARLOTTE COUNTY MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, March 10, 2016, 9:30 a.m.**  
**Charlotte County Administration Center**  
**18500 Murdock Circle, Room 119, Port Charlotte, FL 33948**

**1. Call To Order and Pledge of Allegiance 9:30**

**2. Roll Call**

**3. Chairman's comments**

**A. REMINDER TO ALL VISITORS ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE: PLEASE SIGN IN. It is helpful when preparing the Minutes. A clipboard and a pen are provided on the podium for your convenience.**

**B. REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS STATE THEIR NAME AND ORGANIZATION and TO USE THE MICROPHONE WHEN ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE. It is helpful when preparing the Minutes.**

**C. REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS AND VISITORS TO PLEASE SILENCE THEIR CELL PHONES.**

**4. Changes to the Agenda**

Manatee Management Plan discussion added under other business

**5. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items**

None offered.

**6. Regular Business**

**A.** Approval of the Minutes of the Pre-Agenda Meeting from February 4, 2016 – Additions, Corrections or Deletions – none offered. Approved by acclamation.

**B.** Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting from January 14, 2016 – Additions, Corrections or Deletions – none offered. Approved by acclamation.

**C. MSBU Update**

Mr. Logan provided details to accompany the written report distributed earlier, where there were additional details. He noted that the Alligator Creek bid documents were now in Purchasing and the process was moving ahead. Buena Vista Waterways/Grassy Point bid documents had been received and a low bidder identified; Gulf Cove Waterway are in the permitting process, and Harbour Heights bid documents are expected to be out on the street soon. The North Manasota Key erosion study final draft has been provided by consultants Coastal Engineering and is now on the web site; County staff is currently reviewing funding options. The Pirate Harbor permit has been withdrawn, as anticipated, staff has had a meeting with the MSBU committee to receive direction. The Stump Pass project permit is in hand, the resolution for the State easement was passed, and we are now awaiting the signed document from the State; the anticipated schedule will be similar to what's already published, with advertising in April instead of March, as per the report. Mr. Logan also mentioned that Jason Ouimet went out to move some buoys and found the shoal had shifted south, requiring a new bathymetric survey to place/replace buoys properly.

Capt. Blago posed a question on financing of the project which led to a brief discussion in which Commissioner Deutsch reaffirmed his conviction that WCIND should contribute substantially as the pass is a regional feature, and stating that staff is aggressively pursuing funding options. Mr. Logan added that staff does a funding agreement every year, applying for additional state funds each time, to get reimbursement; while there's no 'sure thing', he felt the County could likely get a substantial portion of its needs met.

Ms. Buck gave recognition to Matt Logan and the team in getting the word out on moving markers; Commissioner Deutsch asked whether the Coast Guard sends out an alert every time there's a change in buoy location, but no one answered on the record.

- D.** Budget Update – Mr. Darden offered brief comments regarding the Financial Report handout he provided, and then called for questions on the Financial Report. There followed a brief PowerPoint presentation on the MAC, their history and purpose. Mr. Darden then explained how the balloting would work as the morning progressed and the applications were considered.

## **7. New Business**

### **A. Grant Application Review**

The group then moved on to consider the first item on the ballots.

Item 1 - Mr. Hamilton moved approval of item one, Mr. Buckley seconded, and discussion ensued. Mr. Hofmeister inquired what the previous award was on this recurring item, and asked if the MAC had set up a limit, because he had the sense that recurring projects growing more expensive each year. Mr. Harris said he felt they are predominately used for fuel, and gas is cheaper, should go down; Mr. Tom Britton, presenting for the request, clarified that the CAP money goes for rental costs from the Civil Air Patrol and that the crew buys their own fuel; ... Chairman Ireland asked if rental costs had risen; Mr. Britton responded that they had not, but the group was asking for the same amount as before. It was pointed out that they were asking for more; Mr. Dick Morrell, also presenting for the group, responded that they had gotten a different plane so they had increased their patrols. The Chairman called the question, which passed with a single Nay vote from Mr. Harris.

Item 2 – Mr. Hofmeister noted that this represented another increase over the prior year; Ms. Betty Staugler responded on this point, noting that their spending activity depends on access to water, which had gone down significantly over the past several years, but has improved recently. Originally, the \$10,000 requested was contemplated to provide a buffer for possible mechanical work on the new craft. Ms. Staugler eventually got a different craft, in better shape, and indicated that she is OK with a reduced request amount of \$5,000. Mr. Dauster asked what happened to unused fund from the past? Mr. Hamilton moved approval in the amount of \$5,000, second by Mr. Hofmeister. The question was called, resulting in a unanimous Aye. Chairman Ireland reminded the group that these votes are all simply recommendations to the Commission, which will have to actually approve disbursement of the funds.

Item 3 – Sea Grant for \$10,000 to reprint the Charlotte Harbor Boating and Angling Guide. Motion to approve by Mr. Hamilton, second by Mr. Harris. Mr. Hamilton asked if the Guide shows speed zones, including manatee speed zones,

throughout the County; Ms. Staugler confirmed that it does. Ms. Buck asked how come there were no requests for this project in recent years; Ms. Staugler indicate the Guide was only done every couple of years. The question was called, and the AYE vote was unanimous.

Item 4 – A motion to approve a request for funding a position administering the Abandoned Vessel and Artificial Reef program was offered by Mr. Dye and seconded by Mr. Gertner. Appreciation was expressed to Roger DeBruler for his participation in this work. The question being called, there was a unanimous vote to approve.

Item 5 – This item was pulled from consideration; Mr. DeBruler said he was available to answer questions, and responded to Commissioner Deutsch's inquiry about possible support from the State for this activity. Mr. Darden indicated that this request would be rolled into the following item.

Item 6 – Build and monitor an addition to an existing artificial reef. Mr. Harris motioned to approve; second by Mr. Bobko. Mr. Ludvig asked about usage of last year's award; Mr. Darden indicate it had not been used. Mr. Hofmeister asked what happened to last year's grant and Mr. Darden indicated unused funds go back into the Boater Improvement Fund (BIF) if not used. Mr. Hofmeister also commented on the duplication of effort he perceived, in that the County would be putting in a structure in one spot while also taking out a structure (trestle) elsewhere. Mr. Hamilton pointed out that there's a safety concern with the trestle and Commissioner Deutsch, concurred, noting that the County is only taking out dangerously failing parts of the trestle. Mr. Hamilton asked for clarification on the monies granted and spent, which other members commented on. Mr. Harris stated his opinion that the money has been managed really well, and in re the trestle, that it addresses what could be a huge County liability.

Commissioner Deutsch commented on the rate of funds usage by grantees, note that many invoices come in late in the year and speculating that most, if not all of money, will be used by end of fiscal year. Mr. Hamilton asked whether there is currently a plan to add to the artificial reef; Mr. DeBruler noted he has procured from various sources including the FY2016 funds, something in the neighborhood of \$35k already, of which \$30k is going toward reefing part of the Mercury Test Center buildings which will be torn down and a preserve will be created. Commissioner Deutsch mentioned prior discussions about old shrimp boat at the Fishery in Placida, asking whatever happened with that; Mr. DeBruler clarified that's over, because the vessel was not capable of being reclaimed, it would just be trash in the water. Commissioner Deutsch then asked what the County's position is on leaving it there; Mr. DeBruler advised that it's not a County concern, it's between the Marina and the State because they have an agreement with the State that requires the bottom to be kept in its natural condition, and State has demanded removal.

Mr. Rose asked the group to consider that a lot of these submissions are estimates as to costs; we should not "punish" people for underspending. Chairman Ireland noted there are still six months left to the end of the fiscal year; he then called the question which passed unanimously.

Mr. Darden asked the group to take a few minutes to discuss the removal of trestle which was the subject of the last application to be received. He noted that

the application is lacking in specifics; there is insufficient financial support in terms of the amount requested (\$200,000); he suggested that they table the application until further negotiations with WCIND can be held, and further documentation of anticipated costs can be provided. Chairman Ireland noted that this had been a late application, however, due to the liabilities possibly involved, he said he felt that discussion probably has to be held regardless. Mr. Hofmeister inquired what makes this an emergency now, when the observations were done in 12/2015, giving plenty of time to present a timely application. He also stated that the funds were not available except from the emergency funds, the spending of which would impact hurricane response later in the year. In addition, his group (the Punta Gorda Isles Fishing Club) had discussed recently the fishing in harbor going downhill over time; they felt the trestle offers the best fishing in the area. Finally, he stated that suggestions about other ways to address this are needed, since the trestle has been around for 100 years and no one has run in to it; he disagrees that is an emergency.

Additionally, Mr. Hofmeister noted that Tampa Bay banned shrimping boats ten years ago, with the result that these boats come in to Charlotte Harbor now, dragging chains across our Harbor bottom, destroying sea grass and causing other destruction. This is a national estuary that needs protecting. Fishing has improved in Tampa since the ban. Mr. Hofmeister argued caution in removal of the pilings, and against the duplication of effort represented by putting structures in elsewhere.

Mr. Hamilton responded that there is a million dollars set aside for emergencies from storms and other emergencies; these are other funds (CNIF). Mr. Hamilton noted that because this is treated as an emergency, which means it doesn't have to come during this cycle; it can be considered by the Committee at any time. Mr. Darden reiterated that it was presented because it was another application and concerns a situation that has been deemed an emergency; the current issue is lack of breakdown on costs. Mr. Hamilton noted that since the group can vote at ANY meeting it should be brought back when the details are available.

Mr. Harris noted that Mr. Darden had sent out an email with photos and engineers report; based on that and what we have done in the past (he noted the usual process in the aftermath of a damaging weather event) all projects would stop, storm damage would be cleaned up, the County would get reimbursed by FEMA. Mr. Darden suggested the matter be tabled until April, and the present meeting move along to keep to their schedule. Chairman Ireland emphasized that there was no plan to eliminate the entire structure, but only to remove the items in the water that represent present hazards to navigation.

Mr. Hamilton presented a motion to table, second by Mr. Buckley. Comments on the matter were offered by Commissioner Deutsch, who noted that the are is important to fishermen, and also that the County doesn't waste money and doesn't remove things if we don't need to; he also suggested that other funding may be available. Staff member Tina Powell also clarified that the project would involve removing some pilings, but replacing or repairing some others; she indicated she would be happy to discuss the project in more detail at a later meeting. Capt. Ralph Allen asked for clarification whether the failure of the structure involved this pier where people walk; Ms. Powell responded that area had been blocked off. Capt. Allen also commented on the shrimpers in the Harbor which is illegal and should be reported to the Marine Patrol or the FWC

whenever observed there. Chairman Ireland called the motion to table the trestle grant application until April, which passed unanimously.

Item 7 A request from the City regarding the pump-out boat, which was denied by WCIND last year because it was deemed to be operational costs; they currently have an amount from the extended 2015 award and this year the activity would be funded from BIF. Mr. Hamilton offered the motion which was seconded by Mr. Buckley. Capt. Blago asked who would pay for the Punta Gorda matching funds requirements for the DEP grant, wondering if the City has put up any money. Mr. David Hilston, City of Punta Gorda, responded that the City has contributed staff time for writing grants but has provided no dollars for actual grant matching.

Ms. Buck asked Mr. Hamilton for a clarification on what she understood was a comment about this activity making a profit; he elaborated that it was a \$20k project, for which matching funds of \$4K were being requested; the remainder will come from a grant from DEP. Ms. Buck rephrased her question to ask whether this would be a recurring grant, which it was. Mr. Buckley spoke to remind everyone that this activity falls under the Clean Vessel Act from the State, and they provide 75% of the cost for the purchase and operation of the boat; the City is to come up with 25% remainder. The boat serves not just the City, it is for the whole county; they keep harbor clean. Chairman Ireland called the question, which passed with a single Nay vote from Capt. Blago.

Item 8 – \$50k for maintenance of marine markers and aids to navigation. Mr. Ludvig motioned approval and Mr. Hamilton seconded the motion, while also pointing out that very few things can come out of the BIF-State and this is one of them. Mr. Ludvig asked for clarification that the funds were reserved specifically for County maintained markers; Mr. Ouimet responded yes. Chairman Ireland called the question, which passed unanimously.

Item 9 – New marine markers; recurring request, BIF funds. Mr. Hofmeister questioned that the request had risen from \$10,000 to \$34,000; Mr. Ouimet responded that the \$10k was for Pirate Harbor specifically, but the permits had not been obtained and so the work had to be put off. The \$24K balance is for SGC. Mr. Hofmeister motioned approval, seconded by Mr. Dauster; the question being called, the motion was unanimously passed.

Item 10 – Concerned marine debris removal. Mr. Dye motioned approval, Mr. Harris seconded the motion. The question was called and was passed unanimously.

Item 11 – Stump Pass dredging, renourishment and groin installation. Chairman Ireland noted that this has been a well-discussed matter, and offered those with anything further to say the opportunity to speak. He said that he understood that this is considered MAC's annual contribution to what has been a recurring charge, but that after the groin installation, there should not be such a high recurring dredge costs. Mr. Harris motioned approval, second by [?]; the matter passed unanimously.

Item 12 – Recurring request for the Don Ball school, to be paid out of WCIND funds. Ms. Donna Ball was available to answer questions regarding this educational effort; she noted that the school had 111 graduates in the past fall

season, and they have 100-125 students each year. Mr. Dye motioned approval; Ms. Bareither seconded; the matter passed on a unanimous vote, Capt. Allen abstaining.

Item 13 – For the CHEC fourth grade environmental program. Mr. Hamilton moved approval, seconded by Mr. Gertner and passed unanimously, Capt. Allen abstaining.

Item 14 – For the CHEC summer camp; Mr. Darden noted it was a lower request this year. Mr. Buckley motioned approval, Mr. Dye seconded. Capt. Blago asked if CHEC had purchased the kayaks; CHEC spokesperson, Doris Button, responded, noting that CHEC had purchased ten craft, and have been reimbursed. Mr. Hamilton asked if CHEC charged for classes; Ms. Button indicated classes are free to the students. Capt. Blago expressed surprise over that information, noting that last year at Cedar Point, the camp was charging a large fee, and Capt. Blago thought the kayaks that had been paid for by the MAC were for that camp. Ms. Button responded that those were different summer classes paid for by a different grant; they are two totally different activities. She indicated that free classes won't be offered at Cedar Point; the program is just for Alligator creek. Chairman Ireland called the question and the matter passed on a unanimous vote, Capt. Allen abstaining.

Item 15 – Peace River Safe Boating materials. Mr. Kumm motioned approval and Mr. Dauster seconded. Mr. Hamilton asked the representative, Betty Campanella, how many people attend these courses; she responded that they served between 400-450 people per year; there is a charge for the regular classes, but there is no charge for the summer Charlotte Harbor Youth Sailing program. Further discussion ensued on program particulars, which were unclear. Mr. Hamilton asked what the material was that was being purchased, and was told text books, charts and the like; Chairman Ireland asked whether that wasn't what the \$60 course fee covered, and Ms. Campanella responded that there were also shipping, postage utilities, operation of the building; When Chairman Ireland pointed out that this would then be funding for operations, not material, she responded that operation costs were very minimal. Ms. Buck asked if this youth sailing was offered at Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club, and whether the group offered this free service to the other two sailing programs in Charlotte Harbor; Ms. Campanella said they did not, at this time, noting it was a new venture. She then indicated that most of the current grant request is intended for electronic equipment, as theirs is very old. Mr. Rose indicated he will abstain; but he commented that MAC money is supplemental to their needs, noting that e.g., books are very expensive. The questions being called, the request was approved on a unanimous vote with two abstentions. A short discussion ensued on the fact that only the representative of the sponsoring organization had to abstain, but not simply because they were a member of the organization.

Item 16 – Trails that teach, for signs requested by TEAM Punta Gorda. Chairman Ireland commented that the amount requested seemed like a lot of money for signs; the TEAM Punta Gorda CEO, Nancy Johnson, responded that each of the intended eight signs would cost \$1,290, based on the City's specification originally developed for Blanchard House. Supplemental information including a drawing is attached to the application; they would be large aluminum signs such as other cities use for their public spaces, and would provide educational information. TEAM Punta Gorda has already paid for three out of other grant

funds. Commissioner Deutsch commented on the cost being consistent with his experience on the Historical Board. They are long-lasting metal signs. Mr. Dye motioned approval which was seconded by Mr. Dauster, and the matter was approved unanimously, Capt. Allen abstaining.

Item 17 – Patrol boat and educational material; new request, to be split between WCIND (\$50,000) and BIF (\$50,000). Chairman Ireland questioned the very specific amount being requested for a used boat, and asked for further information on the boat. Ms. Virginia Bryant, Flotilla Commander, spoke to this issue, indicating she was the person who did the research on what boat to purchase. She noted that while the dollar figure is a guesstimate, she was able to confirm that it was reasonable, when she talked to watercraft dealers at the boat show on Marco Island. Mr. Hamilton asked to clarify that “within the range” refers to the \$76K purchase price, and not the \$15K contingency dollars request, which Ms. Bryant confirmed. Mr. Hamilton further clarified that therefore the actual request being discussed is \$85 rather than \$100K, which she confirmed. Mr. Darden further confirmed that the training materials are broken out from that \$85K; Chairman Ireland also noted that the navigational equipment was a separate amount as well. Answering a question from the Chair, Ms. Bryant indicated that they had not yet identified a specific boat to purchase.

Mr. Hamilton motioned approval of \$85K and Mr. Dauster seconded. Capt. Blago asked Ms. Bryant, if the request is approved and the motor subsequently breaks, who pays to repair that; Ms. Bryant responded that she has volunteer to fix things with donated materials. Capt. Blago said he was not a fan of buying used boats and then having to pay to repair; Ms. Bryant said she would not come back for additional funds for repair.

Mr. Hamilton voiced concern that every flotilla is now going to come to the MAC asking for the same thing. Ms. Bryant commented that Sarasota County supports Flotilla 92, so that won't be an issue; other adjacent Flotillas do not cover as big an area as hers. Mr. Hamilton indicated that was not his question, which was just about setting a precedent. Chairman Ireland asked where it would be moored; Mr. Bryant responded the intention was to keep it in the water and to that end, three members have donated dock space for that purpose. Mr. Gertner asked why they would consider a used boat for this kind of money; Ms. Bryant responded, because of the outfitting standards for Coast Guard, including sonar, etc. Chairman Ireland pointed out that's equipment, and the members were asking specifically about the choice of a used BOAT; she indicated she didn't think new could be had for this sum of money. Further discussion ensued as to matters of cost, what equipment was included and other purchase details.

The question was asked whether the motion for \$85K could be amended; Mr. Harris indicate that, like Capt. Blago, he is uncomfortable with providing a boat and then having to field similar requests later from the other flotillas; it would be better if the Flotilla came to the MAC after having raised money first and requested a grant to supplement those funds; Ms. Bryant responded concerning the many years of service to the community which the Flotilla has provided.

Chairman Ireland asked what is required to equip a boat to meet the facility requirements; Ms. Bryant responded: two radios minimum; jack plate for shallow water; hooks, lines (tow lines) which are very expensive, to a specific number; sonar, radar, two sounding devices (horn and hailer.)

Commissioner Deutsch recapped the request, which Ms. Bryant confirmed. Mr. Hofmeister asked what the group has been doing in previous years; is this a new operation. Ms. Bryant responded that they had used private vessels, as many as 13 once, but now down to 3 vessels; people currently must go to other flotillas for their training. Further discussion ensued, and Mr. Harris recapped his objections with reference to specific figures in the application, with responses from Ms. Bryant as to the various sources of funds being sought. Ms. Bareither commented that this unit is frequently called on to assist the Lee County flotilla, and we are training on their boats because we have so few in our own flotilla. Chairman Ireland asked whether the motion needed to be amended or voted as is; the decision was to vote on the existing motion seeking \$85K. Ms. Bareither recused herself; the motion passed with three Nay votes, from Messrs. Bobko, Harris and Hofmeister.

Item 18 – Fleet training Boat, Englewood Sailing Assoc. Chairman Ireland observed that this was another boat purchase stating, as others have indicated, this can get out of hand, and we can't buy boats for everyone. Mr. Hugh Moore spoke in support of the request, noting this was their 14<sup>th</sup> year of operation on an all-volunteer basis. Mr. Hamilton questioned who was served, e.g. how many Charlotte County vs. other locations; Mr. Moore primarily Charlotte County, but he did not have figures. Mr. Hamilton asked if they have gone to Sarasota for funding; Mr. Moore indicated that they have, and Capt. Blago concurred and voiced his support. Further questions were posed, including whether the organization was a non-profit, which Mr. Moore indicated it was. He also indicated they have a lease agreement with Sarasota County for our space at Indian Mound park; he indicated they do charge \$60 per child for each session (there are two sessions covering several months of the year.) Mr. Dye commented on their budget which he said shows it's not a small operation and is very valuable for kids. Mr. Hamilton moved approval; Gertner seconded the motion. Ms. Bareither expressed concern over the new sailboats asking if they teach boater safety along with the other activities; Mr. Moore indicated they teach it but it is a requirement in order to do their program. Upon the questions being called, the matter was approved unanimously.

Item 19 – Learn to Sail request to expand the scope of their operation. Ms. Buck motioned approval, Ms. Bareither seconded. David Blair spoke on behalf of Learn to Sail, which is located at the Bayfront Center. This group also is asking for two boats which they need because their current boat is inadequate to get adults on the water; additionally, it requires a special dolly. He said the other items are for the safety boat for an outboard motor, and for comfort items for the instructors who are out on the water all the time. Mr. Hamilton asked to clarify if this is the group that was the Y and the previously-approved boats got transferred to you, with the stipulation that if the business failed the boats would go back to the Y; Mr. Blair indicated it was. Mr. Hamilton asked if this is the same deal, and Mr. Blair indicated it was. Mr. Darden clarified that the request last year was from the Y; this year, it's from Learn to Sail; he indicated that the agreement was for those boats last year, not this present request, and if these guys go out of business, it has nothing to do with the YMCA. The question having been called, the motion was approved with a single Nay from Mr. Dauster.



[The meeting then adjourned for lunch; the group reconvened at 12:30 at which point Mr. Hofmeister and Mr. Dauster left for a prior appointment. At 1:00 p.m., the second half of the meeting commenced.]

Item 20 – Charlotte Harbor seawall replacement – new request, coming out of BIF funds, to assist the City's shortfall on this project. Mr. Hamilton moved approval, second by Mr. Dye. Chairman Ireland indicated he was curious as to how MAC got into putting in seawalls; Mr. Hamilton responded, because we did it last year, and it represents 10% of the project. Further discussion ensued; Mr. Buckley indicated he also thought one of the storms took out several linear feet and that pushed up the timetable to do the work. Mr. Harris asked where would it be; it was clarified that it would not be for private seawalls. The questions being called, the matter was unanimously approved.

Item 21 – City request for channel markers. Mr. Hamilton moved approval, second by Mr. Dye. Mr. Hamilton noted that this concerned required safety features based on State standards. Chairman Ireland noted that in South Gulf Cove, such things are funded through an MSBU; Mr. Rose said he believes all of these are outside the canal maintenance district, in the harbor and thus are more comparable to funding given the County each year.

Commissioner Deutsch inquired where markers will be going; Ms. Cathy Miller from the City Department of Public Works, gave the location information. Commissioner Deutsch asked whether the proposed pilings and markers on public exterior waterways or in interior private canals; Ms. Miller confirmed they were intended for exterior waterways and referred to the attachment location map for this item. Capt. Blago suggested that the MAC was already paying the county every year to maintain navigational markers and that this therefore seems to be a duplication of effort; he asked if it can all be combined, with one group taking responsibility. There is about \$100M committed for whole county and now the City needs \$80M; can there be any economies of scale achieved with a different approach. Mr. Hamilton responded that the City does \$100M every year, and this has never come up before; this expenditure is to bring the markers up to current requirements. Mr. Gertner asked whether this isn't all state submerged lands; Ms. Miller responded that the City holds the permit for those particular markers and the County probably has a permit for theirs. Mr. Ludvig asked, with regard to "bringing the markers up to code", did the code change; response was offered by Mark Gehring, City Engineer, who acknowledged that Jason Ouiment had pointed out some deficiencies in the City's signs which was very helpful. He also indicated the City will look at piggybacking with the County on this in future. Mr. Harris, looking at the overhead display of the map, noted there's about 48 signs and asked if all are being replaced; Mr. Gehring responded that the image is the total inventory, not all are being replaced. Chairman Ireland called the question, which passed with unanimous approval.

Item 22 – Search and rescue (SAR) boat motor, to paid from WCIND and BIF fund. Mr. Hamilton asked whether this is a non-profit organization; representative Mike Hassle responded that they were, and answered other questions regarding numbers of rescues and the like. He clarified that if remains are found, then the recovery is handled by the Sheriff's dive team; On live find, such as for e.g. autistic kids, they also do rescue. Questions were also posed and answered regarding the group's relationship with the Sheriff's Department; the type of engine they are looking to buy in order to provide a better environment

for the dogs that are on the team; places throughout the state where they perform their duties, which include areas outside their "home base" of Charlotte County, because it is a specialized function they provide – they are the only water recovery outfit in the state. Ms. Buck asked who trains/certifies their dogs and personnel; this is done by national organizations. Mr. Buckley moved approval, which Mr. Dye seconded, and the matter passed unanimously.

Item 23 – Marine rescue boat, based on a Charlotte County EMS request; funds will be half from WCIND and half from BIF, to replace the current 13 year old craft. Various questions were asked about disposal of the current boat and who would build the new vessel; Mr. Harris observed that the group had the old boat for 13 years and apparently never put anything aside in their budget in reasonable anticipation of eventually buying a new one. Jason Fair from EMS acknowledged that the group had done a poor job of anticipating this inevitability; he also described changes they had made in maintenance and upkeep, e.g., through buying different motors and the problems with removal of the original pump and how it was tied into the structural integrity of the vessel.

Ms. Bareither asked where is the Boat kept, which is at Gasparilla. Mr. Hamilton indicated that he was with Mr. Harris in thinking the group should have considered other funding sources, such as grants, and wonders why MAC is to bear the whole burden. The representative said they do consider other sources but those often limit the scope of use, such as where they could operate or what they could do; Mr. Hamilton asked him to describe such limits; he referred generally to restrictions of the response area but did not elaborate.

Mr. Rose observed that the County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was deeply in the hole, and that if funding can be handled by some other organization with the funds, it makes good sense for the taxpayers. Mr. Rose then posed questions about vessels, equipment, and numbers of responses, which the EMS rep answered. Mr. Kumm moved approval and Mr. Rose seconded.

Capt. Blago commented that much as he liked buying boats, and certainly the group has bought plenty for our government organizations, and they are good to have there, if we get in trouble, but would it not be better if each organization put these in their own budgets to be approved by the BCC. The taxpayer will be paying in any event. Capt. Blago pointed out that MAC had a consensus years ago: *no more boats*. He also noted that the request is fully one-third of all the funds that would be approved today.

Following some discussion on the chosen boat, the representative was asked whether there are less expensive options out there, noting this is the most expensive boat ever proposed to MAC. The representative referred to rising boat prices; Mr. Hamilton countered by asking what they would do if the MAC had a ceiling of, say, \$300,000 on grants. The representative noted they would end up with a boat with less functionality. Further technical discussion ensued on boat capabilities. Mr. Harris asked if EMS would be selling the old one; the representative agreed, but indicated that some part of the equipment would be retained in order to make future repairs, and that there may not be a lot of value in what remained. Mr. Harris also asked for confirmation that the maintenance of this boat is in their budget, and asked if they would also be setting up a replacement fund to buy a new one in 13 years. Mr. Buckley supported this idea of building replacement craft into these budgets. Further discussion ensued on

this topic. Commissioner Deutsch commented that we do have the money, but asked what the alternative would be if the group didn't get the boat, what would the outcome be for needs in the West County; the representative responded on the anticipated difficulties. Ms. Buck also asked whether there was going to be anything moving forward requiring the department to fund this in their budget; Commissioner Deutsch suggested it would be appropriate to make this concept part of the recommendation along with the vote. Mr. Harris, considering the scenario where the group did actually set money aside over several years in anticipation of replacing equipment, would the Commission leave that money alone when reviewing that group's budget during the budget process; Commissioner Deutsch indicated that the Commission would respect their work in providing for their own maintenance and replacement of equipment. Further discussion ensued on this topic, including Mr. Dye's observation that organizations are so strapped for money, that even if they set money aside, if it is needed for safety gear or something similar, that reserve will get spent; Commissioner Deutsch reminded the group that these types of challenges are only going to grow. Upon the question being called, the matter was approved with two nay votes, Mr. Bobko and Capt. Blago.

Item 24 – Rigid Inflatable Boat for Charlotte Harbor Youth Sailing. Chairman Ireland noted that this is a very expensive boat and asked why it was needed. Mr. MacDonald, representing the group, responded that it would operate safely in winds of 15-20 knots. Ms. Buck noted that Mr. MacDonald had mentioned regattas, but the application referenced a coach boat for sailing classes, and she asked about the discrepancy; Mr. MacDonald responded with reference to the issue about the winds and how they affect the current vessel. Mr. Kumm motioned approval; Ms. Buck seconded. Mr. Harris raised the same question as with the prior applicant: why can't the organization get any grant money outside, and come here with some funding already in hand; what about having a fundraiser? Chairman Ireland suggested that the Committee could have a discussion about instituting a new requirement: you can come to us for half the money. Mr. Meckenberg noted the application indicates the group has four two-week summer camps; he asked what other time of the year do you contemplate using it; Mr. MacDonald said in addition to the summer camps, it's used in conjunction with the advanced sailing program and anticipated to be used for any high school program they might have in future; also the regattas. Mr. Meckenberg restated his question: when would it be used outside the summer season; Mr. MacDonald did not provide a responsive answer. Capt. Allen observed that the application included \$1,800 sales tax and \$2,800 for a radar arch for night ops (which the application says they seldom do) and he asked if that nearly \$5,000 could come off. Mr. MacDonald said the arch was not for radar, it's where you put your navigational lights and antenna; Chairman Ireland challenged that notion, saying that a RIB supports lights on the bow. Ms. Buck asked why the group would be paying sales tax if they are a 501(3)c. Mr. MacDonald provided an explanation which indicated that the group did not understand its tax exempt status; Mr. Rose and others explained to him that in the State of Florida you get a state tax exempt certificate and this has nothing to do with whether you are reselling items. Mr. Dye observed that there was no sales tax indicated on the invoice. Additional information was provided to the applicant on there being no necessity for the arch inasmuch as it's not structural to the boat and not needed for lights or for antenna; Mr. Gertner suggested that the arch would be in the way anyhow. Mr. Dye also objected that the \$22,950 doesn't cover shipping which was an additional \$1,500. Mr. Kumm proposed

amending the motion to \$25,000 eliminating the arch; Ms. Buck seconded. Mr. Hamilton asked if there are no sources for this boat locally; Mr. MacDonald indicated that this recommendation is from a dealership in Marco Island. It was pointed out that is a rather rich market. The question then being called, the request was approved with one nay offered by Mr. Bobko.

Item 25 Concerned the Stump Pass permitting, surveying, and monitoring project. Chairman Ireland observed the group had just put \$150k into dredging, and that there was no one present to speak about it. The decision was made to return to this at another time.

Item 26 – Navigational markers for blueway trails; Roger DeBruler present to answer any questions. Chairman Ireland asked about and Mr. DeBruler discussed the State initiative in this matter. He noted that the neighboring communities have followed through, but Charlotte County had not, and now need to catch up. This is for the kayaks and canoes, and there was a discussion of how much money they bring into the County. Mr. Hamilton asked if this wasn't basically about tourism, and wondered why the money doesn't come from the tourism agencies. Chairman Ireland agreed that such agencies should at least be contributing to it. Mr. Dye commented that the group shouldn't limit this project by labeling it as being just for tourists since we have residents who also enjoy this. Chairman Ireland asked what, exactly, will the money be spent on; Mr. DeBruler described the pilings and signage that would separate kayakers from boaters. With reference to graphic provided by Ms. Powell, Mr. Meckenberg asked how many of the markers shown on the map are already there; Ms. Powell responded there were almost none, they need to be created. The Committee had provided money before, but it wasn't spent due to the inability to get the permits at that time. Further discussion ensued. Mr. Bareither asked how far the requested funds will go in this signage effort, and whether there would be further requests; Ms. Powell stated that central Port Charlotte would be served by these funds, and they would be back for funds for the next phase of the project. Mr. Hamilton moved approval and Ms. Bareither seconded. Mr. Harris asked why the money would come from BIF instead of WCIND; Mr. Hamilton responded that because we're very limited what we can do with BIF-State funds, we put the limited requests in BIF. Capt. Blago had questions about the present insufficiency of parking at put-ins and residents' complaints, asking will we just be making this situation worse; Ms. Powell stated they are revising the both brochure and website to eliminate inappropriate locations for put-in. Further discussion ensued. The question then being called, the matter passed with unanimous approval.

The group returned to Item 25 and Mr. De Bruler commented about the meaning of DEP Permit Monitoring (it's not "permitting and monitoring") which is a required activity. Fiscal Analyst Marty Simone also commented on this, noting the County is spending way more than \$50k a year on DEP requirements. Chairman Ireland asked whether the group hadn't already spent \$150K on dredging and suggested this was overlapping somewhat; Mr. Simone responded that it's for building the groin and the sand removal from the pass, whereas this new request concerns the State Park area and monitoring activities; it is to maintain a safe parking area, monitoring of sea grass, turtles, etc., and is an ever-growing list. Motion by Mr. Rose, seconded by Mr. Gertner, and approved on a unanimous vote.

Item 27 – Portable classroom. Mr. Hamilton asked the applicant's representative whether they have their permits; Mr. Dane Hahn responded that they haven't yet bought the classroom, but that the supplier would be handling the permits. Further discussion ensued. Ms. Bareither asked for confirmation that maintenance of the structure is the applicant's responsibility, the Mr. Hahn confirmed. Ms. Bareither moved approval, second by Mr. Buckley; Mr. Meckenberg recused himself. The matter was approved unanimously.

Item 28 – Mr. Hamilton observed that this is the smallest request ever from CCSO; Mr. Kumm moved approval, second by Mr. Dye. Chairman Ireland commented that this request is all for the Marine Patrol. Off. Lytle was present to answer questions, providing some information about their efforts getting into a government rotation program for their outboard motors, which should produce great savings in the future, and also improve resale value. He indicated there would be a further request for \$45K later in the year, for three outboards. The question having been called, the matter passed unanimously. Mr. Darden clarified CCSO will submit a late application on the three outboards.

Item 29 – The Charlotte Harbor Harborwalk project is back after being tabled last year; Ms. Deborah Forester present to answer questions. Mr. Hamilton asked why it was tabled last year; Ms. Forester mentioned timing, noting the matter has been in permitting since last June. Once National Marine Fisheries Service finally moved it along, it then went to the Army Corps for another two months. The goal is to be starting construction in September of this year, and finalize a year later. Capt. Blago asked her to tell the group how much MAC has already contributed; Ms. Forester responded that, if the group approved this grant, it will have been \$900K altogether for a \$5 million project. Mr. Hamilton asked what happens after this phase; Ms. Forester briefly described the next phases and Mr. Hamilton asked if this meant that MAC is finished with this program. Ms. Forester noted that there is always a possibility, in a 30-year project, that they might need to come back.

Capt. Allen, pointed out that some of the requested funds are for a dock for a water taxi, but there is no water taxi service; he asked why not build two fishing piers instead, which we know will get used, rather than put a quarter-million dollars toward a service that doesn't exist. Or, at least consider designing the structure for later convertibility to a water taxi dock in the event there's ever a Punta Gorda landing spot created. Further discussion ensued on this suggestion. Mr. Harris questioned the use of BIF funds, noting that if the permit takes longer than anticipated, we'll still have funds, unlike with WCIND monies. Mr. Darden suggested keeping the water taxi concept there since it speaks to the issue of improving boater access (e.g., Boater Improvement Fund) which a fishing pier doesn't meet. Mr. Dye motioned approval and Mr. Harris seconded. The matter passed with one nay from Capt. Allen.

Item 30 – On-the-water weather observation system (currently there is no such service in the Harbor.) Mr. Kumm noted that there is a weather reporting station called SailFlow at the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club. Mr. Ronald Jones, presenter for the request, objected with details, noting that the wind data reported by the existing station is not completely reliable, due to obstructions, nor does that existing system feed into the NOAA forecast modeling data, as this requested device would do. Mr. Harris asked if they would be putting it on a piling; Mr. Jones said that, after discussions with the Coast Guard, the recommendation is to

mount it on Marker 4 in the Peace River. He indicated that they had verbal approval from the Coast Guard, but no actual permit. Mr. Buckley recused himself, introducing Mr. Jones who he noted is retired from the U.S. Weather Service, and is the project manager; Mr. Buckley recommended the project. Ms. Buck motioned approval, second by Mr. Dye. Mr. Kumm asked how is it to be powered, by solar; Mr. Jones confirmed that. Mr. Kumm also asked about the maintenance and who would pay for that; Mr. Jones indicated that the grant request includes spare parts in event of a problem, because once you start to provide this, you can't stop. Mr. Kumm asked who actually will do the maintenance; Mr. Jones indicated it would be the Peace River Power Squadron. Ms. Bareither commented that bird waste is the biggest maintenance problem, and she asked if that has been considered; she also highly recommended that the group get something in writing from Coast Guard before proceeding. Mr. Jones agreed with her observation about birds and said there would be spikes to keep birds from settling on the piling. He also said he would request a formal letter along with their submission of a photograph of the proposed mounting. Ms. Bareither next recused herself. Ms. Buckley asked about how it will be accessed, e.g., is it a phone app; Mr. Jones gave some technical details on how this data gets to the internet, noting it will be available via widget to any website that wants to display it. Mr. Ludvig recused himself. Upon the question being called, the matter passed with a unanimous vote.

**8. Old Business**

**9. Other Business**

- A. Manatee Management Plan. Mr. Hamilton spoke about this issue, noting he is a member of the Manatee Management Plan Committee. Rather than having to go through a number of agencies to get dock approval, this Plan streamlines the process in certain parts of the County, anywhere from 3 to 10 docks per 100 feet. The Committee has reviewed the Plan, and anticipates it being approved and then distributed for public review, and then submitted to the Commission to approve an Ordinance. Chairman Ireland asks if the Plan will involve any additional manatee zones; Mr. Hamilton confirmed that it will not, it will just make it easier for people putting in docks.

**10. Citizen Comments**

None offered.

**11. Good of the Order**

- A. Capt. Blago commented briefly on evidence of construction out at Bay Heights.

**12. Next Meetings**

- The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held Thursday, April 7, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. in Room B-106.
- The next Regular Meeting will be held Thursday, April 14, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 119.

**13. Adjournment**

On motion made and unanimously accepted, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.